

value obtained by linearly interpolating between the two numerical values differing from 0 that are nearer to the empty item, and belonging to the same column; and

*A 2  
cont.*  
providing the matrix with a number of items (i, j) higher than the number of samples  $x_j$ ;

REMARKS

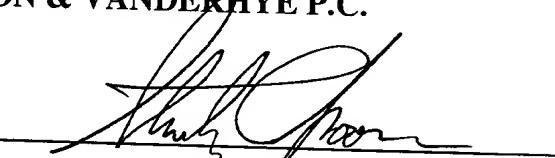
It is respectfully requested that the above preliminary amendment be entered prior to examination of the claims on the merits. These amendments add headings and subheadings in accordance with U.S. patent practice. Additionally, a number of minor typographical errors and/or modifications of claim and specification language have been made. And several newly written independent claims are offered for consideration.

Having responded to a number of errors noted with respect to the originally filed application, it is submitted that pending claims 1 through 18 are in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully solicited. In the event the Examiner is of the opinion that a brief telephone or personal interview will facilitate allowance of one or more of these claims, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact applicant's undersigned representative.

**DE RENZIS**  
**Serial No. 09/437,469**

Respectfully submitted,

**NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.**

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